



# SEA BRAGGIN'

## St George Scuba Club Newsletter

### Weekends

*Ladies Weekend - Anne Anderson*  
*Illawarra Camp and Dive -*  
*Michael McFadyen*

**Pages 1, 11**

### Shore Dives

*The Basin Mangroves -*  
*Gary Dunnett*  
*Shiprock - Paul Pacey*  
*Parsley Bay - Peter Flockart*

**Pages 7, 17, 19**

### Boat Dives

*Osborne Shoals - Shelley*  
*Brueseker and Paul Pacey*

**Page 20**

### Marine Conservation

*Presentation - John Prior Mangroves*

**Page 7**

*Underwater Landscapes Pictorial*

**Page 25**

## LADIES WEEKEND

### 1 - 3 March 2013

On Friday 1 March, amidst the relentlessly pouring rain, Shalene and I bravely set off to Darling Point to collect Melinda. This was to be a weekend of diving, relaxation and fun for just us ladies to relish leaving our men folk behind to fend for themselves. Despite the cyclones and severe flooding just north of our destination, Byron Bay,



we soldiered on in our usual strong-willed, determined and positive vein, not letting even a hurricane deter our path. The journey passed ever so quickly as the conversation in the car was riveting, and, as I was to discover, only got juicier as the weekend flowed on. Shalene, myself and Melinda were the first to arrive at the Shoal Bay Holiday Park, where we had reserved three Catamaran Villas side by side. Shortly after that Donna, Kelly, Nancy and Shelly arrived. Later Janine joined us from far north Red Rock, a good five hour drive, battling flooded roads and pelting rain and no guarantee of being able to return home any time soon due to the ever-increasing risk of severe flooding. Janine has to be the most strong-willed lady amongst us; I don't think I would have ventured that far alone in those conditions!

First and foremost the fridges were charged with champagne, wine, cheese, biscuits, chippies and the like, and the partying began without delay. Dinner was at the Shoal Bay Country Club that night. Despite the distances that we had all travelled, and some after a long day's work, back home at the villa the champers and wine flowed on into the wee small hours.

Saturday, after a hearty, healthy breakfast and coffee at a café in





Nelsons Bay, Donna, Kelly and Nancy geared up and went for a dive at Fly Point. Due to recent flooding in the area the vis was pretty short, at around 2m, however this brave little crew thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The rest of us visited a festival that was on at the Nelson's Bay Marina that weekend. Not many stalls were operating as it was still raining relentlessly – the wine stalls were set up as their goods would not spoil in the wet and their spirits were high. We made the most of it and did some serious taste testing of all the different wines and ciders. We also enjoyed a neck and shoulder massage from a physiotherapist and bought his magic muscle relaxing rub stuff to add to our collection of magic muscle relaxing rub stuff at home.

Saturday afternoon back at the villa the divers crashed for the afternoon to recharge for the evening while the rest of the crew put together a 500 piece puzzle depicting brightly coloured jungle birds. This feat was achieved in just three and a half hours, many hands make fast piecing.

Dinner that night was at a Thai restaurant, food was very scrummy indeed and the evening back at the villa was filled with lots of laughter, chatter, fun and needless to say plenty of champers, wine and chockies well into the night and again on into the wee small hours. Donna impressed us with her massage skills and knowledge and several of us lucky girls enjoyed a massage whilst chit chatting away.

So despite the adverse weather, our spirits were not dampened at all. We all got home safely and I am pleased to say that Janine got all the way back to Red Rock safely without having to paddle. A great week end was had by all, new friendships were formed and should I say we all got to know each other very well. It will be great meeting up again at dives, activities and meetings.

Thanks to Kelly for organizing the week end and I look forward to many more to come.

Anne Anderson





## JB Seal Diving Weekend Aug 2013

**When: Fri 23 - Sun 25 August 2013**

**Where: Jervis Bay**

Double boat dives Saturday and Sunday (including one dive with the seals).

**At least one dive will be with the seals, conditions permitting! The remainder will be boat dives to local dive sites.**

We have done this trip the last three years running and spaces fill up lightning quick, so get in early! The house is perfect for our group and the people at Ulladulla Dive are very accommodating.

### Diving:

Ulladulla Dive Centre can cater for 13 divers:

<http://www.ulladulladive.com.au/crew/duckunder.html>

- Retail rates for double dives is \$110 (we'll get \$90 for 10 divers or more, plus one free of charge)
- Airfills for \$7
- No tanks provided – if you take one tank and they provide one it will be an added charge of \$10.00, or you can hire both tanks (or take 2 of your own!)
- Payment in full required beforehand – I will collect money in advance and pay in one transaction. Refunds for cancellation due to bad conditions.

### Accommodation:

I have again booked the house, “Seahaven” <http://www.stayz.com.au/11509>

House comfortably sleeps 15 people, with 3 bathrooms and 3 toilets (main bathroom with large spa bath). There is a LUG for dive gear and a BBQ we can make use of. BYO linen!

**Total cost for 15 people for 2 nights is \$620, divided equally per person.**

Dinner at Vincentia Golf Club (5 mins walk up the road) on Fri night, Club Curry night at home on Sat night. Yummo.

**Contact Natasha on 0410 074 677 or  
[natasha@bluecucumber.com](mailto:natasha@bluecucumber.com)**



# SEA BRAGGIN'

## MANGROVES OF THE BASIN, ROYAL NATIONAL PARK

The Basin is a sandy tidal creek that flows through a mangrove forest on the southern shore of Port Hacking, between the suburbs of Bonnie Vale and Miainbar. In the last two editions I've looked at the Basin's Dumpling Squid and Seahares. This time I want to concentrate on the mangrove forest itself, and in particular some of the unusual photographic opportunities that occur as the tide floods the mangroves.

The layer of water covering the forest floor would struggle to exceed 30 cms depth on an average high tide. Peering into these shallows feels a bit like looking into an aquarium. This impression is reinforced by the dense schools of small fish and shrimp flitting about the tangled mass of mangrove trunks and roots. One of the more common species, the diminutive Eastern Blue Eye, is even popular as an aquarium fish.

Mangrove trees sit at the interface between the terrestrial and marine worlds, their canopies merging with the adjacent forest while their trunks and aerial roots bind them into the mud of the estuary. This dual nature offers a great subject matter for 'split shots', with part of the frame under the water and the remainder above. Playing with these shots is a great lesson in the way



even the shallowest of water strips the intensity out of light. A balanced exposure usually requires strobe to compensate for those underwater losses. The other challenge with these shots is the inevitable dribble of water over the lens housing. The





distortions that result occasionally contribute to an image, however I prefer to avoid them by treating the port with a bit of spit and a polish to minimise beading.



A second characteristic of shallows is the way in which light reflects from the underside of the water's surface. The reflections allow you to create shots that include a mirror image of your subject. If the surface is still the duplicate will be exact, while



any disturbance will create distortions in the reflected version. The mirror effect works particularly well in images with strong vertical elements, especially the wonderfully gnarled mangrove trunks.

Another aspect of photography amongst the mangroves relates to the optical phenomena known as Snell's Window. Snell's Window is the effect where, to an observer looking upwards, the surface appears as a circle of light surrounded by dark. It is often used to create a circular frame around a diver silhouetted against the surface.

The dark 'surrounds' of the window are generated by the reflection of any light striking the water at an oblique angle. The bright circle within window is produced by the component of light that penetrates the water from directly above. An aspect of Snell's Window that is not apparent in deep water is that, while the areas around the window are much darker, they are illuminated by light reflecting off the underside of the water.

Those reflections are barely discernable in water much deeper than a metre or so. However, in well-lit shallows, the water surface outside the window will show a reflection of whatever is happening below, while the actual window will capture a view of directly overhead.

What is missing from this view is the wedge of light that tries to enter the water from anywhere but directly overhead.

This wedge is exploited by predators such as herons and egrets, which carefully stay within the hidden zone to stalk fish and other prey.

The result is that a carefully framed shot can capture a side view of the flooded forest, a reflected view of that underwater scene, and a 'window' showing the mangrove canopy above. This shot requires a more oblique angle than the vertical perspective of the classic Snell's Window, but even a partial arc of window creates some wonderful effects. It all sounds complicated but it is really just a matter of jumping in and having fun experimenting.

**Gary Dunnett**



## St George Boys' Weekend 2013

**When: 4 - 5 May 2013**

**Where: Port Stephens**

### **Diving**

Double boat dives on Saturday and Sunday with "Let's Go Adventures" to Broughton Island via two boats – 27 places available

- Diving will be from \$104 for double per day (includes one air fill)
- Nitrox available at discounted price of \$17 if required.
- Shore diving if weather does not co-operate for boats.

### **Accommodation**

- Accommodation in 8 units in Nelson Bay.
- Cost \$82 per head for weekend, available for Thursday/Friday/Saturday and Sunday nights at this price.

To book your spot, please pay \$50 deposit asap to St George scuba Club Account via eft BSB 062028 Acc No. 00800455 or directly to Kelly at a meeting.

When a payment is made, please email Kelly and myself to be added onto the list.

Any questions please contact me by email or at a dive or meetings.

**Contact Ray on 0403 437 974 or  
[rayscases@aol.com](mailto:rayscases@aol.com)**





## MARINE CONSERVATION PRESENTATION

Recently, I was fortunate to see a presentation by Professor Callum Roberts, who is a marine conservation biologist in the Environment Department at the University of York in England. The presentation was hosted by The David Thomas Conservation Oration 2013, in the auditorium at Sydney Law School, The University of Sydney.

Besides being a highly awarded scientist, Professor Roberts is a prolific author and researcher. His talk on Monday night was, in reality, a launch of his new book published in 2012, called "Oceans of Life".

Professor Roberts' knowledge and experience is not only limited to the laboratory, he has extensive experience ranging from the coral reefs of Saudi Arabia, to the Americas and Caribbean. He has worked with the U.S. National Research Council Committee on Marine Protected Areas, and the U.S., British, and Caribbean governments on the creation of marine reserves. He is also a member of the Marine Reserves Working Group at the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis in Santa Barbara, California.

Professor Roberts spoke of the wave of biodiversity loss in marine and coastal ecosystems, and the projected extinction of many species over the next few decades. His data supports the assertion that the Great Barrier Reef will be gone by 2030, with





some academics suggesting that it cannot be saved no matter what is done now.

He also highlights the continued march of climate change and the recorded increase of sea levels, in Sydney, of 1cm per year over the past 5 years. Increased warming of the seas and increasing acidification by elevated levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide, will push marine species away from the equatorial areas further to the polar caps – you just have to ask around the club about the increasing numbers of tropical species appearing in Sydney and further down the coast.

But not all is doom and gloom. His work on marine reserves and protected areas shows that there is a rapid and dramatic recovery of fish and other animals after protection. Those that have been to Palau can attest to this.

Findings have alerted scientists and environmental managers to the scale of human impact on ocean wildlife and show that marine species can still recover. The downside of this is a loss of diversity and size. The idea of reduction in size may appear odd to you, but the picture above was taken at the same area, the board the fish are attached to does not change, but the fish have dramatically reduced in size, number and variety. The photo top left was taken in the 1950's. Bottom left was taken in the 1970's, and the picture on the right in 2007.

The size question I still find odd: my understanding was that, due to human harvesting, the fish are forced to mature faster and as such are smaller. Maybe someone with a biology background could explain this in a more lucid manner.

Professor Roberts makes the point that these changes have occurred in living memory: the little girl in the photo top left may well be alive today and could, if asked, recall the deterioration of the seas and fish stocks.

When asked what can we do, he replied let people know – educate people to the changes and to the inevitable outcome if changes are not made.

Thanks to Caroline Corcoran for letting us know about these talks. This is the second that I have attended and found absolutely riveting, so please Caroline could you continue to keep us informed when these talks are happening.

As a final note, if you are planning on attending one of these talks, it is a good idea to reserve a seat, there was competition for standing space at this talk, and it was a very large auditorium.

John Prior

## Tank for sale

120 c/f steel tank

In test until March 2014

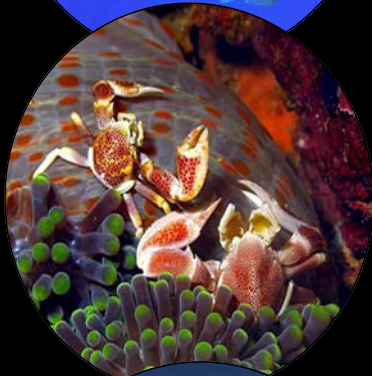
\$200

Contact Graham

0409 312 363







# EAST TIMOR

## Ultimate Dive Expedition

19 - 31 August 2013

13 Days / 12 nights Ex Darwin

Diver from **\$2,090** per person

**Price Includes:** ( Non Diver - \$995 )

- Return flights ex. Darwin to Dili flying with Air North
- Return airport transfers in Dili
- 12 nights twin share bunk room air conditioned guest house accommodation at The Dive Guest House (shared kitchen and bathroom) - Dili, Sat TV, Internet Connection, swimming pool
- Breakfast daily at the Castaway Bar
- Half Day Dili city tour
- 22 Dives (6 shore local dives, 10 shore Dili surround dives and 4 boat dives and 2 complimentary night dives) Includes: tanks, weights, dive guide services, & transfers
- Australian Departure taxes ( Value: \$240.00 - subject to change

**Cost Does Not Include:**

- Travel Insurance & Personal spending monies and Excess Luggage Surcharges
- East Timor Entry visa USD 30.00 (subject to change)
- East Timor departure tax USD10.00

**Room Upgrade:**

Upgrade to Twin Share (1 x Queen + 1 x Single) - additional \$92 per person for 12 night stay

**Conditions Apply:**

Prices are subject to change without notice due to fluctuations in exchange rates.

**Booking Requirements:**

To secure your place on this expedition, you will need to complete a booking form and return it together with a non refundable deposit amount of \$300.00 per person.

Booking Reference # S12695

Date : 06/11/12

**FOR BOOKINGS AND MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT**

**DIVE**  
ADVENTURES  
YOUR DIVING HOLIDAY SPECIALIST

www.diveadventures.com.au



**Contact: Paul Pacey**  
Mobile: 0431 691 173



## Timor Dive Trip 2013

We will be diving with Dive Timor Lorosae (DTL).  
Check out their website at: [www.DiveTimor.com](http://www.DiveTimor.com)

We will be staying in the guesthouse, which is located alongside the dive shop right on the beachfront in Dili. Above the accommodation is the Castaway bar and restaurant. The complex has its own pool. It is located in Dili itself so it's a short walk to other restaurants, shops, markets, etc.

The four boat dives will be to Atauro Island - see the DTL website for details.

We have also arranged with DTL that we can have an optional third dive per day, which will be at Pertamina Pier. This is one of the best muck dives in East Timor. If we choose to do a third dive, the dive operator will supply a driver to take us to the Pertamina Pier (a 5 minute drive) and wait for us to do our dive before transporting us back to our accommodation. These additional dives are \$25 per diver.

The trip is limited to 8 divers and as at 13/11/2012 we have 4 spots available.

Contact Paul Pacey for more information or to book.

Contact Paul Pacey  
[Paul.Pacey@iinet.net.au](mailto:Paul.Pacey@iinet.net.au) or 0431-691173





# SEA BRAGGIN'

## ILLAWARRA DIVING AND CAMPING WEEKEND

9 – 10 March 2013

After over a month of awful weather, we finally had some good days leading up to this weekend. Kelly and I left home about 7:45am on Saturday 9 March and arrived at the Gutter at Bass Point at about 9am. We were not the last to arrive, but must have been close to it. For the first time for probably over 10 years, there was a huge crowd of people here and all parking spots were taken.



On this trip were Ron and Donna, Digby and Natasha, Eda and Ray, Michael and Ally, Dave C, Maxine, Chris H, Peter F and Mat. Also diving at Bass Point were Peter B (Judith came along as well), David Q and some non-diving friends and John W.

Some divers came out of the water just after we arrived and declared that the visibility was only two metres. This turned a few off diving. In the end, about 11 ended up diving. As soon as I hit the water I decided that these two prophets must have the same visibility God as

Heinz, as the visibility was much better than they said, a minimum of five metres and in some spots, well over 15 metres.

For the first time in ages the seas were flat so the entry and exit was easy. Kelly, David Q, Peter F and I headed down the western side of the site and then into the other gutter that heads west. There were a lot of seapike, yellowtail and one-spot pullers about, as well as about 10 small squid. The visibility here was really good.

We then headed east across the mouth of the main gutter. Here we found some cuttlefish and Peter B, who was concentrating on photographing, found some nudibranchs. We ended up back in the shallows and spent some time

exploring here. Some of the others went out to the start of the sponge garden before returning back to the Gutter.

After diving, we had morning tea in the car park. Once we had all packed up, everyone apart from John headed off in a convoy for the camping site. We travelled via Jamberoo and then up the mountain to the escarpment. The camping site is near the Blue Pool, which is near Carrington Falls in Budderoo National Park.

Kelly and I found this camping area in 2008 when we took our US member, Mark Ranft and his wife Jill, on a sight-seeing trip. At that time, the camping area was not mentioned on any







website I could find, although it is now on a couple (but not the NPWS site!). The camping area is small and we take over the whole area. Luckily there was only one vehicle here, a small motorhome. He decided to move to the parking area for the picnic area, so we ended up taking over his spot as well.

The camping area has four tables, four barbecues (old style) as well as a new toilet. We set up camp (Kelly winning of course, closely followed by Dave C, Ron and Chris). We decided to have lunch before going for our freshwater dive.



After lunch, most went for a dive or at least a swim in the Blue Pool. This is a small lake formed by a natural dam on a creek and is located at an altitude of 590 metres. It is about 60 metres long and 40 metres wide. I have no idea why it is called Blue Pool as it is certainly not blue in colour. The water is a sort of tea colour. After all the rain it was about the same visibility that we had last time we dived here, say two to three metres. This is more than enough to find your way around this small lake. We were using the remaining air from our first dive.

Kelly decided to have a swim as did some others including Judith. David and I went in together while many others

dived by themselves. The lake is only four metres deep at the most. As soon as we entered we found a car battery (that was there three years ago) which was a good navigation point.

Things seen were quite a few tadpoles that were half way to changing into frogs, lots of bug like creatures darting across the bottom, spider-like creatures dashing about in mid-water and even a few small fish. This time I do not think anyone saw yabbies like last time, although I did see the shell from one.

Anyway, a few trips around the lake, during which we encountered Donna, Ron and Eda and it was time to exit. I did 26 minutes bottom time. By the way, the water was 18.4°C.

Peter and Judith and David and his friends left after the dive/swim. The rest of us relaxed till the nibblies and drinks were brought out (some starting earlier than the sober ones!). Andrew and his girlfriend Talese arrived a bit later. This was good, as Andrew was bringing a supply of timber for the fire (we had some that others brought along). Meanwhile some played bocce on the camping area's roads.

Ron, Dave C and I brought out our Bidji barbecues and we set these on the concrete base up around the fireplace. Digby's barbecue was placed inside the main barbecue as this was missing a plate. The best thing about the Bidji is that only a small amount of timber is needed to cook with. I had brought along a pile of







pine and earlier had chopped this into small pieces.

Natasha went around and collected orders for the steaks and I then cut up the two huge rumps I had purchased into the right sized pieces. After the sausages were cooked, Dave supervised Ron and myself cooking the steaks.

We ended up having a great feast, with salads made by Kelly and Natasha, with plenty of help from others.

After dinner we had more drinks (the port came out and totally disappeared) and sat around the fire. The last ones finally went to bed sometime after 11 pm.

The next morning we had a late start. After breakfast and packing up, we attempted to do a walk to a lookout but the track crossed the creek and even the track was covered as far as we could see by water. We ended up walking down the creek to the



next set of pools.

After morning tea, we drove to Carrington Falls and did the walk to the lookout and falls. It was now after midday, so we headed off to Robertson and the pie shop for lunch. The most popular choice seemed to be the chilli and volcanic chilli pies!

After this, everyone headed

home.

This was a very nice weekend, a couple of dives, one of which is pretty unique for NSW, some camping and a few drinks, great food and good company. Next year, perhaps a camping weekend somewhere else.

**Michael McFadyen**

**Photos by Ron Walsh and Peter Flockart**



**Cutting Onions!!**





# SEA BRAGGIN'







## Pacific Jewel “Live Aboard” Cruise and Dive Trip

Tuesday 9 July – Wednesday 18 July 2013

### Cruise the Pacific and dive at each port!

The plan is for group of St George Scuba members to travel on the same Pacific cruise and to dive at all the ports along the way. With a minimum group of six divers we can pre-arrange the dive centres to pick us up directly from the wharf at each port, ensuring the maximum amount of dive time.

While in port, any non-diving partners will be able to arrange other activities either by themselves or together, making this trip ideal for members with non-diving partners!

As there is in effect no weight limit you can bring as much dive gear as you want, cameras and all. I have even taken my own lead on past trips (trim weights only)!

While many members may have dived in Vanuatu before, not many may have dived at Easo on Lifou. Lagoon Safaris is a boutique operation, in a pristine location, run from a shipping container by expat Annabelle. Lifou is part of the Loyalty Islands group: <http://www.lagoon-safaris.nc/>

With return airfares costing about the same as the whole trip it is a rare opportunity to sample diving at the Isle of Pines: <http://www.kunie-scuba.com>

In Port Vila, Vanuatu we may possibly dive with the new dive operator, Devil's Point Dive: <http://www.devilspointdive.com>

While on cruises I have scuba dived many times overseas and there is a lot to be said for it. No luggage limits; no need for non-diving days when travelling at sea level; personal fibreglass lined shower for washing and drying your gear. Also, you arrive where you dive (the Ocean) so direct transfer is possible and you get to sample multiple locations.

Finally, you have limited guilt over non-diving fellow travellers!!

Pricing and itinerary on next page...

**Contact Marc Werner Mob: 0407239080**







## Pacific Jewel “Live Aboard” Cruise and Dive Trip

Tuesday 9 July – Wednesday 18 July 2013

### Preliminary costing twin share

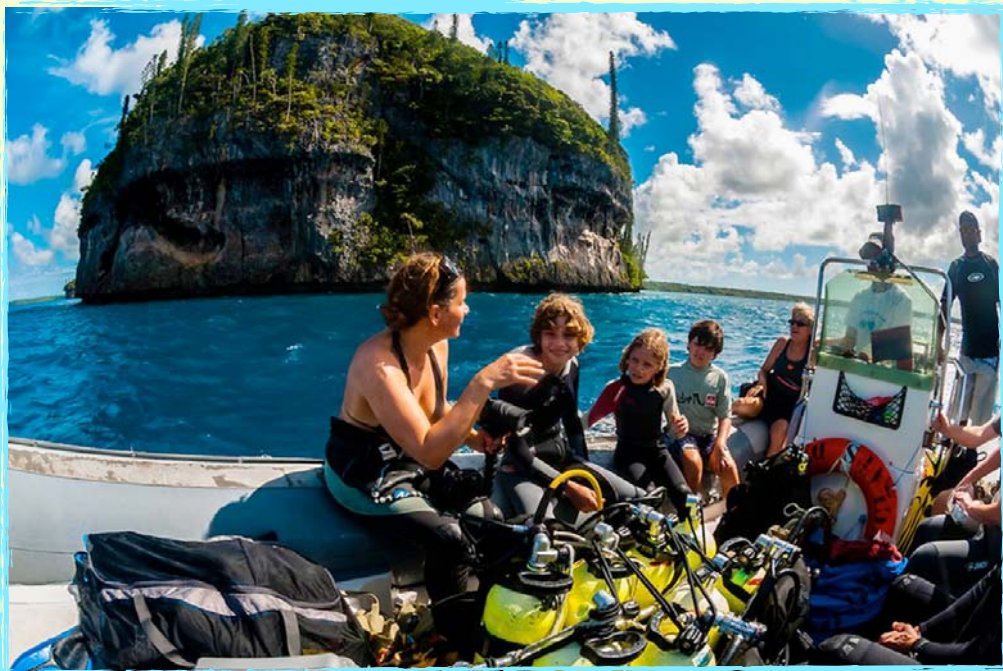
\$1200 non diver (cruise only twin share)

\$1550 diver (as above + 3 double boat dives) including tanks, weights and cruise ship transfers

### Itinerary

Tuesday	09JUL2013	Depart Sydney 1600hrs	Australia		
		at sea			
Saturday	13JUL2013	Vila	Vanuatu	TBA	Double
Sunday	14JUL2013	Lifou	Loyalty Islands	Lagoon Safaris	Double
Monday	15JUL2013	Isle of Pines	New Caledonia	Kunie Scuba Center	Double
		at sea			
Wednesday	18JUL2013	Arrive Sydney 0700hrs	Australia		

Anyone with questions on this trip or diving while cruising contact Marc Werner.



Contact Marc Werner Mob: 0407239080



## SEA BRAGGIN' SHIPROCK – TWO DIVES

**Sunday 10 March and Saturday 16 March**

### **Sunday 10 March attendees:**

Eddie, Jasmine, Bill, John P, Rob T, Gary D, Phil S (and Mrs Short too), Bram, Fiona (first dive in more than 12 months), Ken, Paul P

On 10 March the water looked filthy and we were not disappointed when we entered the water – well, we were disappointed, but we were not surprised. You know what I mean...

On the bright side, with 3 metre viz, losing your buddy was going to be perfectly excusable.

On we plunged into the gloom and soon managed to find a familiar bommie, which was a good start.

One thing we've noticed lately is that there are hardly any nudibranchs at Shiprock – this is very unusual.

After blundering around the bommies for a while we headed over to the main wall where the gloom was not such a problem.

During the dive we managed to see some large frogfish, a couple of friendly octopus, a stropky octopus, a couple of Eastern Smooth Boxfish, and a large school of squid were seen to pass along the wall. There were four pineapple fish at the pineapple fish cave.

In one of the crevices I found what looked to be a doughboy clam. By the time I found Eddie to show him it had “clammed up” which is what you would expect after being

blasted by 900 lumens. A

couple of Moray Eels were seen but the best find was as we approached the exit, where I found 3 juvenile pipe fish in the crevices to the east of the sand ramp. They were only about 5cm long and have a pale white body with dark longitudinal stripes. They don't look like any of the pipe fish in Edgars book or Kuiters book for that matter so I guess they are juveniles of some sort or other perhaps Tiger pipefish? No Eddie, they are not “worms”.



### **Saturday 16 March attendees:**

Maxine, Ken, Hugh, Eddie, Ron, Frank, Paul P and John P (for a couple of minutes)

This day the viz from the surface looked really promising and when we entered the water the viz was better than last week - now 5 metres! Oh well, what the hell, let's go...

There is still a shortage of nudibranchs here but Eddie did manage to find a small group of Splendid Chromodoris which I guess was, well,





splendid.

All the usual suspects were seen (Octopi, Morayi, Pineapplei, etc.)

The best part was near the exit when I was buzzed by a fair sized eagle ray. I was frantically trying to get the guys attention but by the time I did the eagle ray had gone around the corner. Lucky for me it circled back and Eddie and Hugh got to see what I was so excited about. A magnificent creature.



After both dives we adjourned to D'Lish for CACA (Coffee And Cake Afterwards) and a chat which was also splendid.

Thank you to Gary Dunnett, Ron Walsh and Rob Trudgeon for their photos.

Paul Pacey





# SEA BRAGGIN'

## PARSLEY BAY

30 March 2013

On Saturday 30 March I organised a shore dive with a difference in that it was not in the "the Shire".

Originally there was supposed to be 8 divers but with Easter commitments it was reduced to 4: they were myself, Ida DiCamillo, Graeme Poole and Sean Tully – new member. There were others coming but I didn't find out until I got home that afternoon. A message had been sent to me at 11.23pm the previous night!

I arrived early to find plenty of parking and within 40 mins three other divers eager to try an eastern suburbs dive site.

We walked down the stairs and geared up by the wharf before dropping into 22 degree water. The first part of the dive was a swim along the net over a sandy bottom devoid of any obvious life. It was disappointing to see no life such as sea horses on the net.

We turned around and swam under the wharf to the rocks and proceeded north. The depth here ranges from 2m to 15m but we stayed at around 10m since below the bottom slope is mainly mud. The slope along which we

travelled was for the most part bare of marine life except for an incredible number of wine & beer bottles. Seems every boat that visits the bay must throw their bottles over the side. However everyone enjoyed fossicking around in the mess. Also found were mounds of bricks from the houses above and even an old toilet that had been turfed into the harbour and was now home to a number of sea urchins & sponges.

I managed to find a couple of things to photograph: sponges, a lone Sweet Ceretosoma nudibranch and a small cuttlefish.

At 45 mins we turned around and swam leisurely back to the entry point before finally exiting the water after 57 mins.

After the walk back to the cars via the steps (which seemed harder than Shiprock) and a quick change, we enjoyed coffee and biscuits supplied by Graeme.

Everyone said they enjoyed the dive immensely and would do it again.

Peter Flockart







# SEA BRAGGIN'

## OSBORNE SHOALS

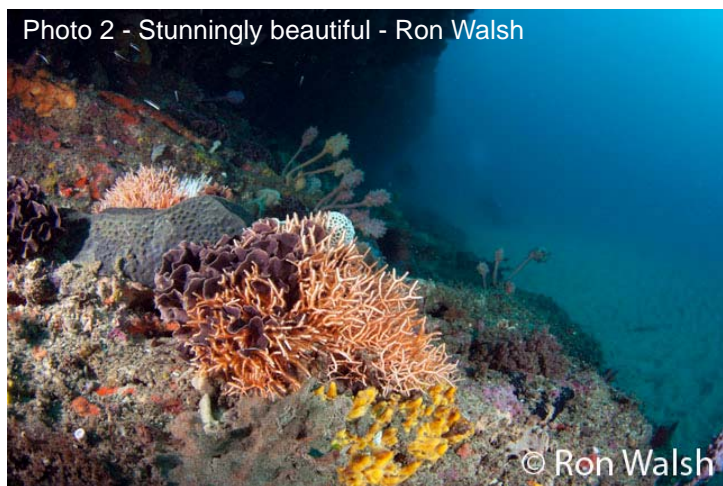
**Saturday 23rd March**

**Shelley:** I had organised 24 divers on 5 boats for this dive, but unfortunately one boat owner called in sick and had to cancel. It is a pity as it turned out to be a beautiful day with no wind, little swell, clean water and bright sunshine.

We dived the site nominated for the day, Osborne Shoals, and Wayne dropped the pick in the mouth of the cave. A 'wow' was heard as the anchor line was followed down, 'good viz'.



**Photo 1 - Boats on the surface - Ray Moulang**



**Photo 2 - Stunningly beautiful - Ron Walsh**

All the boats anchored close by, as there was little movement on the surface, and underwater the anchor lines were doing macramé! The anchor chains were lying flat and the lines were almost standing vertical.

**Paul:** Osborne Shoals is another one of those dive sites where you can find yourself in a barren kelp covered wasteland but only 20 metres away on the edge of the reef is one of Sydney's great dive sites. The Northern and North East corner of the reef are very pretty and I'm amazed that it's not dived more often. The reef wall and the caves and crevices are covered in colourful sponges and ascidians but one of the real treats here is the large number of small gorgonians (Mopsella's?). There are also quite a few Jewel Anemones in and around the cave area. The whole area around the cave is stunningly beautiful.

**Shelley:** Greg and I dropped over the side and could see the bottom as soon as we put our heads underwater. The anchor was on the sand, right in front of the cave, and due to the lack of pull was not set properly and had moved a couple of metres. We picked it up and carried it over to the reef and then had a look inside the cave. We missed seeing the octopus at the back of the cave, reported by others later on.

We were first in the water and with the cave being at the north end of the reef we headed to our left, easterly, and followed the wall around. Not having a camera, I concentrated on the scenery, rather than the microscopic critters! There was plenty of fish life

schooling past from time to time. All the usual suspects, as Ken would say.

Greg found a treasure chest, which turned out to be a fishing tackle box, well covered in growth, and full of sand, so it had been there a while. A large blue groper witnessed the opening of the box, hoping for a snack, and I'm sure I saw his eyes widen when he saw the size of the hooks inside. All the hooks were rusty, but Greg souvenired a hook sharpening stone and a gang hook thingy. At this stage Wayne and Heinz caught up with us. I was getting cold, the water was 17 degrees, so I did a fast circuit over the sand, startling a white stingaree out of hiding.





We decided to turn around and head back to the anchor and found everyone else had followed in our fin wash. Saying hello to everyone we had the benefit of having all the photo opportunities pointed out to us.

There was a queue to photograph a cute little weedy sea dragon and Ron pointed out a shoelace with eyes (a stick pipefish) right next to our anchor.

**Paul:** Just after we turned around I was cruising along the upper edge of the reef when I spotted a numb ray suddenly burst out of the sand below and attack a small red rock cod which had obviously swum a little too close. The attack was really vicious but either the numb ray realised the rock cod was a very prickly mouthful or it became aware of a swarm of divers

Photo 3 - Octopus in the cave - Wayne Heming

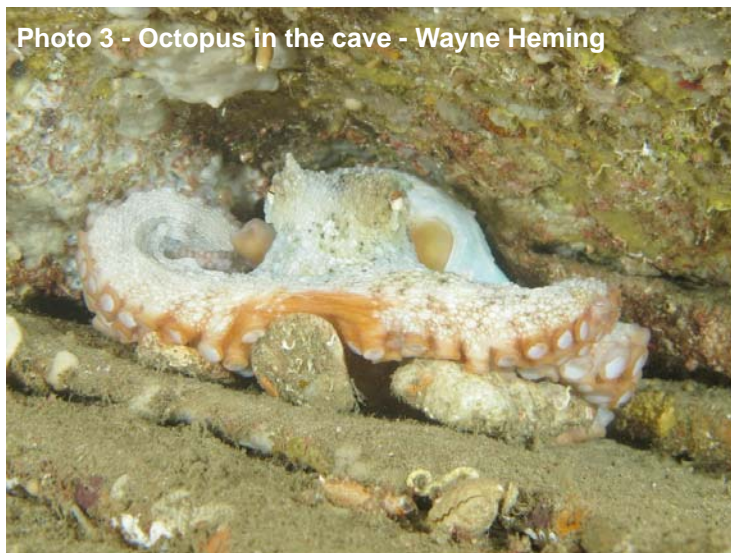


Photo 4 - Tackle box - Wayne Heming



approaching, because it dumped the rock cod and burrowed back into the sand. The rock cod was just lying on the sand and had obviously been zapped when it swam over the numb ray. If the rock cod survived I hope it figures out why it's called a rock cod and not a sand cod! It's a jungle out there on the sand...

**Shelley:** I joined Gary, momentarily, for a scan of the blue water for whales and other big things - it's always good to keep an eye on the big picture too.

We ascended slowly and watched all the activity below us, before drifting off the site as our anchor was unpicked.

We headed for Jibbon Beach for morning tea, and noticed a yacht sitting high and dry on the rocks at Oak Park. It had parked itself on a nice flat portion of the reef and as the tide went out had settled gently onto its keel. There was a small gathering of observers, a Police boat and a Maritime boat in attendance. We speculated on how much damage there was, and how much there might be before it was floated off again, and as it turned out the weather remained remarkably calm so I'm hoping there was only minimal damage. For a very romantic photo of this go to <http://www.flickr.com/photos/sacharules/8581666544/>

**Paul:** According to a report in The Leader the skipper tried to sail into Port Hacking for the night and ended up on the rocks. The embarrassing thing is that the yacht was washed onto the rocks about 100 metres south

Photo 5 - White Stingaree - Wayne Heming







**Photo 6 - All the divers along the wall - Ron Walsh**

with the swells reflecting of the cliffs, the viz was still great, but on the bottom there was a bit of surge and current. We anchored at the split and swam to the cave and back. Wayne and Heinz went a little further. There was a friendly Blue Groper with an urchin spine stuck in his chin. I could almost reach it to pull it out, but not quite.

We saw a Moorish Idol that had attained a reasonable size, at the chicken wire in the

of the navigation sector light (located above Oak Park pool), which is there specifically to stop people sailing onto the reef – D’Oh! Somehow the yacht was salvaged intact on Sunday afternoon.

**Shelley:** We could see every blade of seagrass under us as we moored at Jibbon Beach. We changed tanks and headed out for a second dive at Barrens Hut.

The water here was a bit confused



**Photo 7 - Weedy Sea Dragon - Ron Walsh**

© Ron Walsh

**Photo 8- Greg on the reef & boat on the surface - Ron Walsh**



© Ron Walsh

crack where the cuttlefish hangs out. I contemplated its survival over winter and global warming.

Towards the end of the dive the viz was reducing and as I ascended 2 metres up the anchor line the temperature went from 17 to 20 degrees. The water was cloudy on ascent.

As I waited for my turn to climb the ladder I floated a couple of metres below the boat with a school of tiny fish right in front of my face. They were very nervous and grouped together then rapidly dispersed every few seconds. I wondered where they come from and go to when the boat is not there.





Photo 9 - Yacht on the rocks - Wayne Heming

**Paul:** A little quiz for you all. Why is it called “Osborne Shoals”? (No, I don’t know).

**Shelley and Paul:** Thanks to all the boat owners for providing us all with a great day diving.

**Report by Shelley Breuseker and Paul Pacey**

**Photos by Ron Walsh, Wayne Heming and Ray Moulang**



Photo 10 - Yacht on the rocks - Ray Moulang





## ANZAC Day Long Weekend 2013

**When: Thurs 25 - Sun 28 April 2013**

**Where: Seal Rocks, Treachery Camp**

### **Diving**

Double boat dives on Saturday and Sunday with "Action Divers"

- Up to 24 divers in 2 groups each day
- Diving will be from \$105 for double per day (includes one air fill)
- Nitrox available at \$18 if required.
- Shore diving if weather does not co-operate for boats.
- **A few dive places still available for campers.**

### **Accommodation**

- Campsites at Treachery Beach Camp site still available - make your own booking.

Any questions please contact me by email or at a dive or meetings.

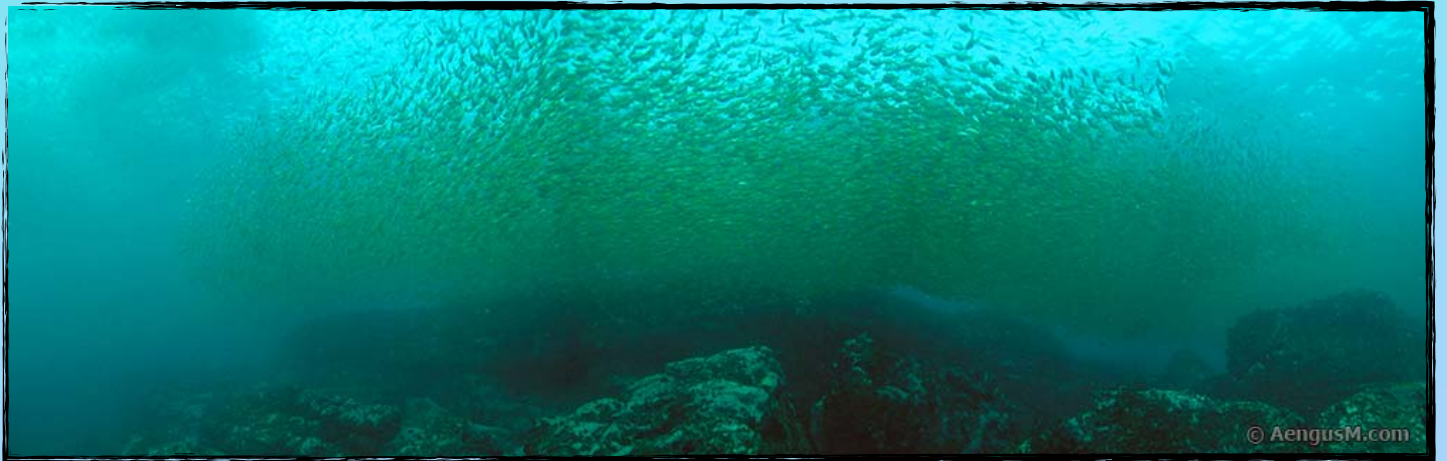
Contact Natasha on 0410 074 677 or  
[natasha@bluecucumber.com](mailto:natasha@bluecucumber.com)





# SEA BRAGGIN'

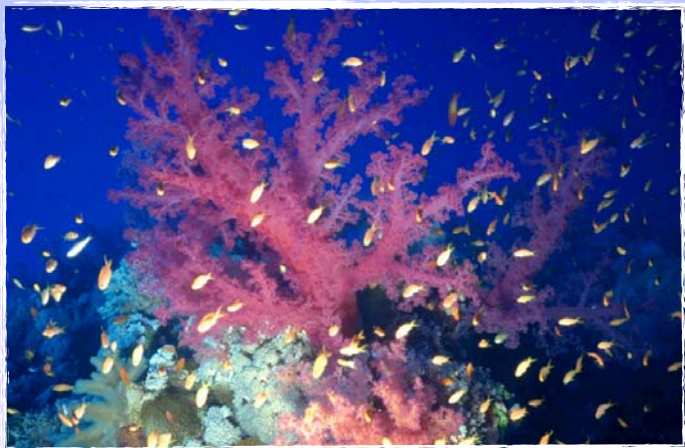
## Underwater landscapes pictorial



"Fish soup": a stitch of 7 images from "The Apartments" off Long Reef, Aengus Moran



Carole Harris

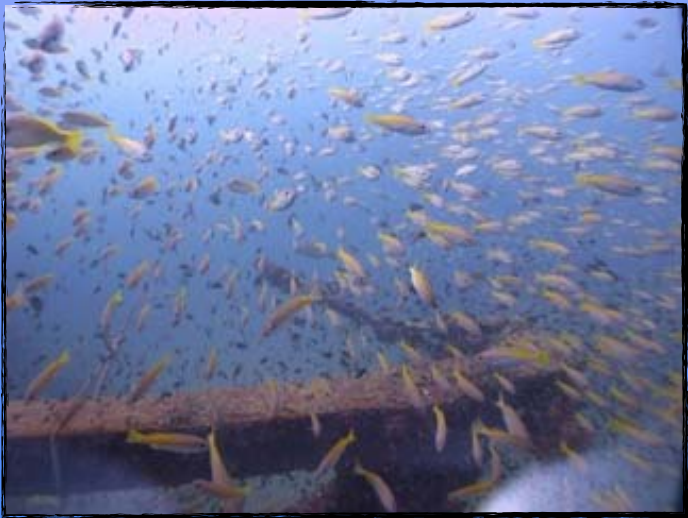






Carole Harris

Daniel Noble







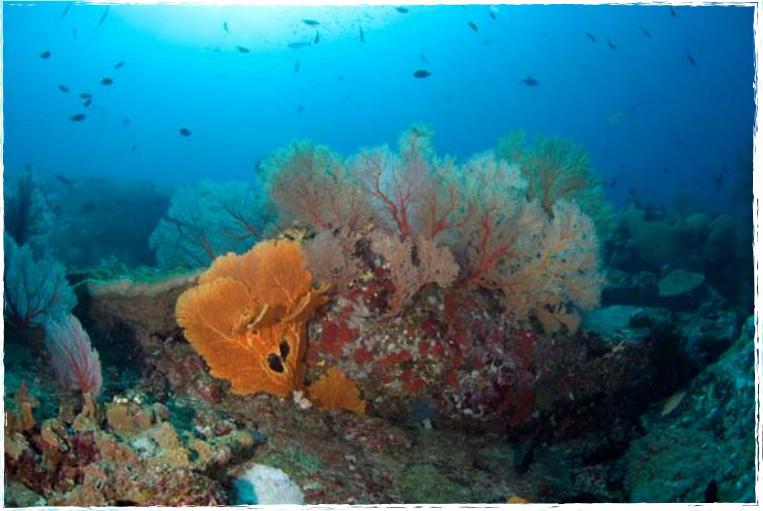
Peter Beaumont



Ron Walsh







Ron Walsh







Ron Walsh







## WHAT'S COMING UP?

WHEN	WHAT/ WHERE	CONTACT	WHEN	WHAT/ WHERE	CONTACT
Sat 6 Apr	Deep Dive SS Tuggerah/ SS Undola	Michael McFadyen <a href="mailto:michael@michaelfadyenscuba.info">michael@michaelfadyenscuba.info</a>	Fri 12 Apr	Blue on Tour Film Festival UNSW	See Dive Log/Contact Dive Adventures
Sat 13 Apr	Shore Dive Kurnell	Eddie Ivers <a href="mailto:eddieivers@iprimus.com.au">eddieivers@iprimus.com.au</a>	Sun 14 Apr	Boat Dive Barrens Hut	Tricia Henry <a href="mailto:thenry456@bigpond.com">thenry456@bigpond.com</a>
Wed 17 Apr	Club Meeting Rowers on Cook	Jason Coombs <a href="mailto:j.coombs@unsw.edu.au">j.coombs@unsw.edu.au</a>	Fri 19 - Sun 21 Apr	Ulladulla weekend	Mark Ridsdale <a href="mailto:msrconsulting@aol.com">msrconsulting@aol.com</a>
Thurs 25 - Sun 28 Apr	ANZAC Seal Rocks trip	Natasha Naude <a href="mailto:natasha@bluecucumber.com">natasha@bluecucumber.com</a>	Thurs 25 Apr	Shore Dive and BBQ Bare Island	Michael McFadyen <a href="mailto:michael@michaelfadyenscuba.info">michael@michaelfadyenscuba.info</a>
Sat 27 Apr	Shore Dive Kurnell Shiprock	Paul Pacey <a href="mailto:paul.pacey@iinet.net.au">paul.pacey@iinet.net.au</a>	Sun 28 Apr	Boat Dive The Balcony	Peter Flockart <a href="mailto:pjflockart@speednet.com.au">pjflockart@speednet.com.au</a>

## CLUB COMMITTEE

President	Jason Coombs	9345 4599	<a href="mailto:President@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au">President@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au</a>
Vice President	Peter Flockart	9371 0265	<a href="mailto:pjflockart@speednet.com.au">pjflockart@speednet.com.au</a>
Secretary	Digby Naude	0403 896 985	<a href="mailto:secretary@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au">secretary@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au</a>
Treasurer	Kelly McFadyen	9545 5596	<a href="mailto:treasurer@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au">treasurer@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au</a>
Assistant Secretary/ Treasurer	David Casburn	0405 186 184	<a href="mailto:dcasburn@iinet.net.au">dcasburn@iinet.net.au</a>
Webmaster	Michael McFadyen	9545 5596	<a href="mailto:webmaster@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au">webmaster@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au</a>
Newsletter Editor	Natasha Naude	0410 074 677	<a href="mailto:newsletter@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au">newsletter@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au</a>

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